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SIPDIS

WHA/CCA FOR GABRIELLA ZAMBRANO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/18/2019  
TAGS: [ETRD](#) [ETTC](#) [PREL](#) [FI](#)  
SUBJECT: CUBA: FINLAND REVIEW TITLE III OF THE LIBERTAD ACT

REF: A. 09 STATE 48487  
[1](#)B. 09 HELSINKI 0013

Classified By: CDA BUTLER FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d)

[1](#)1. (U) Econoff and Poloff discussed Finland's Cuba relations with Kimmo Pulkkinen, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) Ambassador for the Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean. Post provides the following responses to reftel A questions:

[1](#)2. (C) -- Has the host country, in Post's opinion, worked to promote the advancement of democracy and human rights in Cuba?

Pulkkinen reinforced the Government of Finland's (GOF) interest in the advancement of democracy and human rights in Cuba via their EU relationship with Cuba. The GOF supports common EU positions and statements on human rights and democracy in Cuba. Pulkkinen noted that the current EU position is conditional with a one-year review and that the EU's current position is unified only on 'concept'. He remarked that a troika meeting with Havana last week produced a 'null' result.

-- Has the host country made public statements or undertaken other governmental actions, such as resolutions in the national assemblies condemning human rights abuses in Cuba; or actions in support of civil society in Cuba through host country's diplomatic missions or other fora?

The GOF works in concert with the EU on Cuban human rights and civil society issues. Pulkkinen referred to the human rights situation as regrettable, particularly noting the limited release of political prisoners and the requirement that they then leave the country.

-- Have there been any high-level diplomatic visits between Cuba and the host country in the past six months?

A Cuban director-general level delegation visited Finland on their own initiative in September 2008. Pulkkinen said that most bilateral interaction has been informal and between parliamentary delegations.

-- What is the nature of investments (and names, if known) that host country businesses have in Cuba?

Pulkkinen stated that Finnish businesses have few if any investments in Cuba.

-- Are there any bilateral trade agreements or other cooperative agreements between host country and Cuba?

The GOF does not have bilateral trade agreements with Cuba, but works through the EU delegation on trade and cooperation issues.

Are there any exchange programs between host country and Cuba, including but not limited to: scholarships for host country nationals to study in Cuba; Cuban-paid medical travel

for host country nationals; and Cuban doctors working in host country?

-- Pulkkinen stated that there were no significant MFA-funded exchange programs. Generally, Cubans in Finland are in Finland as a result of economic or family-based immigration and not as part of a Cuban or GOF-funded program. Pulkkinen promised to follow up with further information on any GOF Ministry of Education programs. Havana produced statistics on doctors but Pulkkinen questioned the statistical context.  
BUTLER